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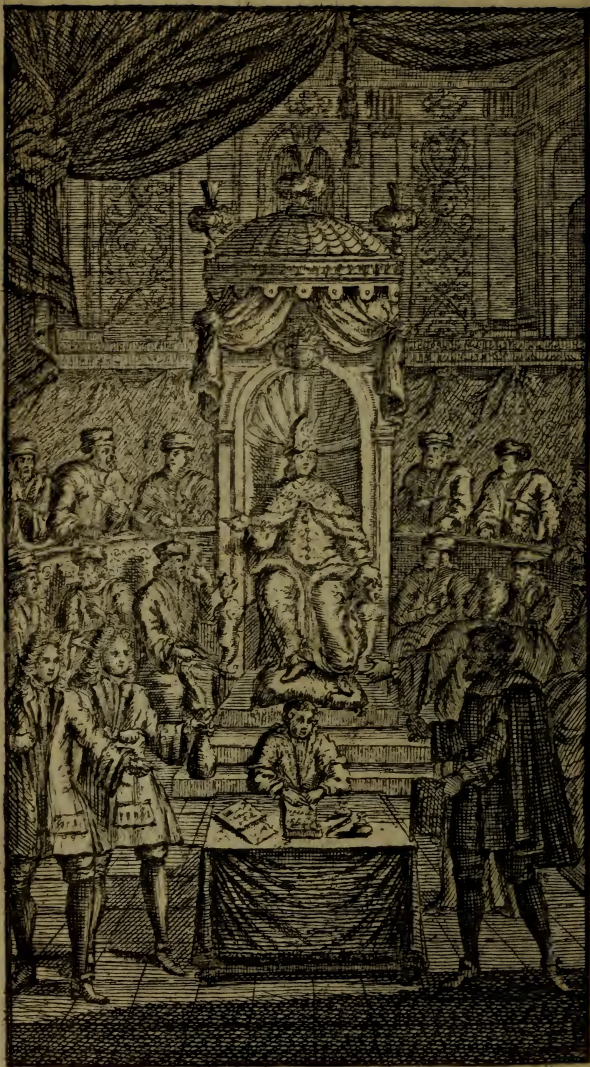


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Wm. Lloyd Garrison

At the Court of Sessions
in the County of Middlesex
this 17th day of June 1868
I the undersigned Clerk of the
Court do hereby certify that
the within and foregoing
is a true and correct copy
of the original as the same
stands on the records of the
Court.

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17.176.68



THE
MERCHANT

OF

17668

VENICE.

By Mr. WILLIAM SHAKESPEAR.



7061
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LONDON;

Printed for J. TONSON, and the rest of the
PROPRIETORS; and sold by the Booksellers
of London and Westminster.

MDCCLXXXIV.

Dramatis Personæ.

DUKE of Venice.

Morochius, a Moorish Prince,
Prince of Arragon, } Suiters to Portia.

Anthonio, the Merchant of Venice.

Bassanio, his Friend, in love with Portia.

Salanio,
Solarino, } Friends to Anthonio and Bassanio.
Gratiano, }

Lorenzo, in love with Jessica.

Shylock, a Jew.

Tubal, a Jew, his Friend.

Launcelot, a Clown, Servant to the Jew.

Gobbo, an old Man, Father to Launcelot.

Portia, an Heiress of great Quality and Fortune.

Nerissa, Confident to Portia.

Jessica, Daughter to Shylock.

Senators of Venice, Officers, Servants to Portia, and
other Attendants.

SCENE partly at Venice, and partly
at Belmont, the Seat of Portia
upon the Continent.

Knapp

Jan. 14, 1922

C



T H E

MERCHANT *of* VENICE.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter Anthonio, Solarino, and Salanio.

ANTHONIO.

IN sooth I know not why I am so sad;
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by
it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn——

And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know my self.

Sal. Your mind is tossing on the ocean
There where your * Argosies with portly sail,
Like signiers and rich burghers on the flood,
Or as it were the pageants of the sea,
Do over-peer the † petty traffickers
That curſie to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Sola. Believe me, Sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes || aboard. I should be still
Plucking the graſs, to know where ſits the wind,
Prying in maps for ports, and peers, and roads;
And every object that might make me fear

A 2

Mis.

* Argosie, a Ship, from Argo. † pretty. || abroad.

4 *The Merchant of Venice.*

Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
Would make me sad.

Sal. My wind cooling my broth
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy *Andrew* dock'd in sand,
Vailing her high top lower than her ribs,
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me strait of dang'rous rocks?
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all the spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
And in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing. Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought,
That such a thing bechanc'd would make me sad?
But tell not me, I know *Anthonio*
Is sad to think upon his merchandize.

Anth. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year;
Therefore my merchandize makes me not sad.

Sola. Why then you are in love.

Anth. Fie, fie.

Sola. Not in love neither! then let's say you're sad,
Because you are not merry; 'twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap, and say you're merry,
Because you are not sad. Now by two-headed *Janus*,
Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper;
And others of such vinegar aspect,
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though *Nestor* swear the jest be laughable.

Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo and Gratiano.

Sal. Here comes *Bassanio*, your most noble kinsman;
Gratiano and *Lorenzo*: fare ye well;

We leave ye now with better company.

Sola. I would have staid 'till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Anth. Your worth is very dear in my regard :
I take it your own business calls on you,
And you embrace th' occasion to depart.

Sal. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bass. Good Signiors both, when shall we laugh ?
say when ?

You grow exceeding strange ; must it be so ?

Sal. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

Sola. My lord *Bassanio*, since you've found *Anthony*.

We two will leave you ; but at dinner-time,
I pray you have in mind where we must meet.

Bass. I will not fail you. [Exeunt *Solar.* and *Sala.*

Gra. You look not well, Signior *Anthony* ;
You have too much respect upon the world :
They lose it, that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously chang'd.

Anth. I hold the world but as the world, *Gratiano*,
A stage where every one must play his part,
And mine a sad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool
With mirth and laughter ; let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandfire cut in *Alabaster* ?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish ? I tell thee what, *Anthony*,
(I love thee, and 'tis my love that speaks :)
There are a sort of men, whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stilness entertain,
With purpose to be drest in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
As who should say, I am *Sir Oracle*,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark !
O my *Anthony*, I do know of those,
That therefore only are reputed wise,

For saying nothing ; who I'm very sure,
 If they should speak, would almost * damn those ears,
 Which hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
 I'll tell thee more of this another time :
 But fish not with this melancholy bait,
 For this fool's gudgeon, this Opinion.
 Come good *Lorenzo*, fare ye well a while,
 I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you then 'till dinner time.
 I must be one of these same dumb wise men ;
 For *Gratiano* never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years more,
 Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Anth. Fare well ; I'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks i'faith ; for silence is only commendable
 In a neat's tongue dry'd, and a maid not vendible.

[*Exit,*

Anth. Is that any thing now ?

Bass. *Gratiano* speaks an infinite deal of nothing,
 more than any man in all *Venice* : his reasons are as
 two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff ; you
 shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you
 have them, they are not worth the search.

Anth. Well ; tell me now what lady is the same
 To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
 That you to-day promis'd to tell me of ?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, *Anthonio*.
 How much I have disab'd mine estate,
 By shewing something a more swelling port
 Than my faint means would grant continuance ;
 Nor do I now make moan to be abrig'd
 From such a noble rate ; but my chief care
 Is to come fairly off from the great debts
 Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
 Hath left me gag'd ; to you, *Anthonio*,
 I owe the most in money, and in love,
 And from your love I have a warranty

T

* *daunt, and damm, in other editions. It alludes to the saying in St. Matth. v. 22. Whoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of Hell-fire.*

T' unburthen all my plots and purposes,
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Anth. I pray you good *Bassanio* let me know it,
And if it stand as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assur'd
My purse, my person, my extreamest means
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised watch,
To find the other forth; by vent'ring both,
I oft found both. I urge this child-hood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Anth. You know me well, and herein spend but
time
To wind about my love with circumstance:
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong,
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have.
Then do but say to me, what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it: therefore speak.

Bass. In *Belmont* is a lady richly left,
And she is fair, and fairer than that word,
Of wond'rous virtues; sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages;
Her name is *Portia*, nothing undervalu'd
To *Cato's* daughter, *Brutus' Portia*:
Nor is the wide world ign'rant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,
Which makes her seat of *Belmont*, *Cholchos' strand*,
And many *Jasons* come in quest of her.

O my *Antonio*, had I but the means
To hold a rival-place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such † thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate.

Anth. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea,
Nor have I mony, nor commodity
To raise a present sum; therefore go forth,
Try what my credit can in *Venice* do;
That shall be rack'd even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to *Belmont* to fair *Portia*:
Go presently enquire, and so will I,
Where mony is, and I no question make
To have of it my trust, or for my sake. [Exeunt.

S C E N E II. BELMONT.

*Three Caskets are set out, one of gold, another
of silver, and another of lead.*

Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. By my troth, *Nerissa*, my little body is weary
of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries
were in the same abundance as your good fortunes
are; and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick
that surfeit with too much, as they that starve
with nothing; therefore it is no small happiness
to be seated in the mean; superfluity comes
sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences, and well pronounc'd.

Ner. They would be better if well follow'd.

Por. If to do, were as easie as to know what were
good to do, chappels had been churches, and poor
mens cottages Princes palaces. He is a good divine
that follows his own instructions; I can easier teach
twenty what were good to be done, than to be one
of the twenty to follow my own teaching. The brain
may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps
o'er a cold decree; such a hare is madness the youth,
to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple.
But this * reasoning is not in fashion to chuse me a
hus-

† thrift, for thriving. * reason.

husband: O me, the word chuse! I may never chuse whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike, so is the will of a living daughter curb'd by the will of a dead father: is it not hard, *Nerissa*, that I cannot chuse one, nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead (whereof who chuses his meaning chuses you) will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly, but one whom you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suiters that are already come?

Por. I pray thee over-name them, and as thou nam'st them I will describe them, and according to my description level at my affection.

Ner. First there is the *Neapolitan* Prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse, and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoo him himself; I am much afraid my lady his mother play'd false with a smith.

Ner. Then there is the Count *Palatine*.

Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say, if you will not have me, chuse: he hears merry tales, and smiles not; I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth, than to either of these. God defend me from these two.

Ner. How say you by the *French* Lord, Monsieur *Le Bo: n!*

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man; in truth I know it is a sin to be a mocker; but he! why he hath a horse better than the *Neapolitan's*, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count *Palatine*, he is every man in no man; if a † throfile sing, he falls strait a capering: he will fence with his own shadow; if I should marry him, I should marry

10 *The Merchant of Venice.*

twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I should never requite him.

Ner. What say you then to *Faulconbridge*, the young Baron of *England*?

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him; he hath neither *Latin*, *French*, nor *Italian*, and you may come into the court and swear, that I have a poor pennyworth in the *English*. He is a proper man's picture, but alas! who can converse with a dumb show? how oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in *Italy*, his round hose in *France*, his bonnet in *Germany*, and his behaviour every where.

Ner. What think you of the * *Scottish* lord his neighbour?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrow'd a box of the ear of the *English-man*, and swore he would pay him again when he was able. I think the *French man* became his surety, and sealed under for another.

Ner. How like you the young *German*, the Duke of *Saxony's* nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon when he is drunk; when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast; and the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to chuse, and chuse the right casket, you shou'd refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of *Rhenish* wine on the contrary casket. for if the devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will chuse it. I will do any thing, *Nerissa*, e'er I will be marry'd to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations, which is indeed to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may

be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as *Sibilla*, I will die as chaste as *Diana*, unless I be obtain'd by the manner of my father's will: I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I doat on his very absence, and wish them a fair departure.

Nor. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a *Venetian*, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of *Mountferrat*?

Por. Yes, yes, it was *Bassanio*, as I think, he was so call'd.

Ner. True, madam; he of all the men that ever my foolish eyes look'd upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise. How now? what news?

Enter a Servant.

Ser. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave; and there is a fore-runner come from a fifth, the Prince of *Morocco*, who brings word the Prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach; if he have the condition of a faint, and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me. Come *Nerissa*. Sirrah go before; while we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E III. VENICE.

Enter Bassanio and Shylock.

Shy. Three thousand ducats? well.

Bass. Ay, Sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months? well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, *Antonio* shall be bound.

Shy. *Antonio* shall become bound? well.

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy.

Sky. Three thousand ducats for three months, and *Antonio* bound?

Bass. Your answer to that.

Sky. *Antonio* is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Sky. No, no, no, no; my meaning in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me, that he is sufficient; yet his means are in supposition: he hath an Argosie bound to *Tripolis*, another to the *Indies*; I understand moreover upon the *Ryalto*, he hath a third at *Mexico*, a fourth for *England*, and other ventures he hath squander'd abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land-rats, and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pyrates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is notwithstanding sufficient; three thousand ducats? I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assur'd you may.

Sky. I will be assur'd I may; and that I may be assur'd, I will bethink me; may I speak with *Antonio*?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Sky. Yes, to smell pork, to eat of the habitation which your prophet the *Nazarite* conjur'd the devil into? I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the *Ryalto*; who is he comes here?

Enter Antonio.

Bass. This is Signior *Antonio*.

Sky. [*Aside.*] How like a fawning *Publican* he looks! I hate him, for he is a christian: But more, for that in low simplicity He lends out mony *gratis*, and brings down The rate of usance here with us in *Venice*. If I can catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him. He hates our sacred nation, and he rails Ev'n there where merchants most do congregate, On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,

Which

Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe
If I forgive him.

Bass. *Shylock*, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store,
And by the near guesses of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats: what of that?

Tuball, a wealthy *Hebrew* of my tribe,
Will furnish me; but soft, how many months
Do you desire? Rest you fair, good Signior, [*To Anth.*
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Anth. *Shylock*, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking, nor by giving of excess,
Yet to supply the ripe wants of my friend
I'll break a custom.——Is he yet possess'd
How much he would?

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Anth. And for three Months.

Shy. I had forgot, three months, you told me so;
Well then your bond: and let me see, but hear you,
Methought you said, you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Anth. I do never use it.

Shy. When *Jacob* graz'd his uncle *Laban's* sheep,
This *Jacob* from our holy *Abraham* was
(As his wife mother wrought in his behalf)
The third possessor; ay, he was the third.

Anth. And what of him? did he take interest?

Shy. No, not take int'rest, not as you would say
Directly int'rest; mark what *Jacob* did.

When *Laban* and himself were compromis'd
That all the * yeanelings which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as *Jacob's* Hire; the Ewes being rank,
In th' end of autumn turned to the rams;
And when the work of generation was
Between these woolly breeders in the act,
The skilful shepherd † pecl'd me certain wands:
And in the doing of the deed of kind,
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes;
Who then conceiving, did in yeaning-time

* ewelings. † pil'd.

Fall party-colour'd lambs, and those were *Jacob's*.
 This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
 And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

Anth. This was a venture, Sir, that *Jacob* serv'd for;
 A thing not in his pow'r to bring to pass,
 But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heav'n.
 Was this inserted to make int'rest good?
 Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast;
 But note me, Signior.

Anth. Mark you this, *Bassanio*?
 The devil can cite scripture for his purpose.
 An evil soul, producing holy witness,
 Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
 A goodly apple rotten at the heart.
 O what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

Shy. Three thousand ducats! 'tis a good round sum.
 Three months from twelve, then let me see the rate.

Anth. Well, *Shylock*, shall we be beholden to you?

Shy. Signior *Antonio*, many a time and oft
 In the *Ryalto* you have rated me,
 About my monies and my usances.
 Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
 For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
 You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
 And spit upon my *Jewish* gaberdine,
 And all for use of that which is my own.
 Well then, it now appears you need my help:
 Go to then, you come to me, and you say,
Shylock, we would have monies; you say so,
 You that did void your rheum upon my beard,
 And foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur
 Over your threshold: money is your suit,
 What should I say to you? should I not say,
 Hath a dog money? is it possible
 A cur can lend three thousand ducats? or
 Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,
 With bated breath, and whisp'ring humbleness,
 Say this: fair Sir, you spit on me last *Wednesday*,
 You spurn'd me such a day; another time
 You call'd me dog; and for these curtesies

I'll lend you thus much monies.

Anth. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friend, (for when did friendship take
A * breed of barren metal of his friend ?)
But lend it rather to thine enemy,
Who if he break, thou may'st with better face
Exact the penalty.

Sky. Why how you storm ?
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my monies, and you'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

Anth. This were kindness.

Sky. This kindness will I show ;
Go with me to a Notary, seal me there
Your single bond, and in a merry sport
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body it shall please me.

Anth. Content, in faith, I'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me,
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Anth. Why fear not man, I will not forfeit it ;
Within these two months (that's a month before
This bond expires) I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Sky. O father *Abraham*, what these christians are !
Whose own hard dealings teach them to suspect
The thoughts of others ! pray you tell me this,
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exacti^on of the forfeiture ?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man,

* breed of metal, meaning money at usury, money that breeds more—The old editions (two of 'em) have it, A bribe of batten metal—

Is not so estimable or profitable,
 As flesh of muttuns, beefs, or goats. I say,
 To buy his favour, I extend this friendship:
 If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
 And for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Anth. Yes, *Shylock*, I will seal unto this bond.

Sky. Then meet me forthwith at the Notary's;
 Give him direction for this merry bond,
 And I will go and purse the ducats strait,
 See to my house, left in the fearful guard
 Of an unthrifty knave, and presently
 I'll be with you. [Exit.

Anth. Hie thee, gentle *Jew*.

The *Hebrew* will turn christian, he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms, and a villain's mind.

Anth. Come on, in this there can be no dismay,
 My ships come home a month before the day. [Exeunt.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

BELMONT.

*Enter Morochius a Tawny-Moor all in white, and three
 or four Followers accordingly, with Portia, Nerissa, and
 her train. Flo. Cornets.*

MOROCHIUS.

M I like me not for my complexion,
 The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
 To whom I am a neighbour, and near bred.
 Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
 Where *Phæbus'* fire scarce thaws the icicles,
 And let us make incision for your love,
 To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
 I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
 Hath fear'd the valiant; by my love I swear,
 The best regarded virgins of our clime
 Have lov'd it too: I would not change this hue,
 Except to seal your thoughts, my gentle Queen.

Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led,
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes:
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary chusing.
But if my father had not scanted me,
And hedg'd me by his wit to yield my self
His wife, who wins me by that means I told you;
Your self, renowned Prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet,
For my Affection.

Mor. Ev'n for that I thank you;
Therefore I pray you lead me to the caskets
To try my fortune. By this scimitar,
That slew the Sophy and a *Persian* Prince,
That won three fields of Sultan *Solyman*,
I would out-stare the sternest Eyes that look,
Out-brave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If *Hercules* and *Lychas* play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is *Alcides* beaten by his † page,
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance,
And either not attempt to chuse at all,
Or swear before you chuse, if you chuse wrong,
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage; therefore be advis'd.

Mor. Nor will not; therefore bring me to my chance.

Por. First forward to the temple, after dinner,
Your hazard shall be made.

Mor. Good fortune then! [Cornets.
To make me blest or cursed'st among men. [Exeunt.

S C E N E II. V E N I C E.

Enter Launcelot alone.

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to
run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at
† rage. mine

mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, *Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo*, good *Launcelot*, or good *Gobbo*, or good *Launcelot Gobbo*, use your legs, take the start, run away. My conscience says no; take heed honest *Launcelot*, take heed honest *Gobbo*, or as aforesaid, honest *Launcelot Gobbo*, do not run, scorn running with thy heels. Well, the most couragious fiend bids be pack, *via* says the fiend, away says the fiend, for the heav'ns rouse up a brave mind, says the fiend, and run. Well, my conscience hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, my honest friend *Launcelot*, being an honest man's son, or rather an honest woman's son——for indeed my father did something smack, something grow to; he had a kind of taste.——Well, my conscience says, budge not; budge, says the fiend; budge not, says my conscience; conscience, say I, you counsel well; fiend, say I, you counsel ill. To be rul'd by my conscience I should stay with the *Jew* my master, who, God blefs the mark, is a kind of devil; and to run away from the *Jew*, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the *Jew* is the very devil incarnal; and in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the *Jew*. The fiend gives me more friendly counsel; I will run, fiend, my heels are at your commandment, I will run.

Enter old Gobbo with a basket.

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master *Jew's*?

Laun. O heav'ns, this is my true begotten father, who being more than sand-blind, high gravel-blind, knows me not; I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you which is the way to master *Jew's*?

Laun. Turn up, on your right-hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all on your left; marry at the very next turning turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the *Jew's* house.

Gob. By God's fonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit;
can.

can you tell me whether one *Launcelot* that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young master *Launcelot*? (mark me now, now will I raise the waters;) talk you of young master *Launcelot*?

Gob. No master, Sir, but a poor man's son. His father, though I say't, is an honest exceeding poor man, and God be thanked well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young master *Launcelot*?

Gob. Your worship's friend and *Launcelot*, Sir.

Laun. But I pray you *ergo*, old man, *ergo* I beseech you, talk you of young master *Launcelot*?

Gob. Of *Launcelot*, an't please your mastership.

Laun. *Ergo* master *Launcelot*, talk not of master *Launcelot* father, for the young gentleman (according to fates and destinies, and such odd sayings, the sisters three, and such branches of learning,) is indeed deceased, or as you would say in plain terms, gone to heav'n.

Gob. Marry God forbid, the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman; but I pray you tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack Sir, I am sand-blind, I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed if you had your eyes you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son, give me your blessing, truth will come to light, murder cannot be hid long, a man's son may; but in the end truth will out.

Gob. Pray you Sir stand up, I am sure you are not *Launcelot* my boy.

Laun. Pray you let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing; I am *Launcelot*, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am *Launcelot* the *Jew's* man, and I am sure *Margery* your wife is my mother.

Gob. Her name is *Margery* indeed. I'll be sworn if thou be *Launcelot*, thou art mine own flesh and blood: lord worship'd might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin, than *Dobbin* my Fill-horse has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem then that *Dobbin's* tail grows backward, I am sure he had more hair on his tail than I have on my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord how art thou chang'd! how dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present; how agree you now?

Laun. Well, well; but for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest 'till I have run some ground. My master's a very *Jew*: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famish'd in his service. You may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father I am glad you are come, give me your present to one master *Bassanio*, who indeed gives rare new liveries; if I serve him not, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune, here comes the man; to him father, for I am a *Jew* if I serve the *Jew* any longer.

Enter Bassanio with a follower or two.

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted, that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock: see these letters deliver'd, put the liveries to making, and desire *Gratiano* to come anon to my lodging.

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship.

Bass. Gramercy, would'st thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, Sir, a poor boy.

Laun. Not a poor boy, Sir, but the rich *Jew's* man; that would, Sir, as my father shall specify.

Gob. He hath a great infection, Sir, as one would say, to serve.

Laun. Indeed the short and the long is, I serve the *Jew*, and have a desire as my father shall specify.

Gob.

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce catercousins.

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is, that the *Jew* having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being I hope an old man, shall frutifie unto you.

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is——

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to my self, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and though I say it, though old man, yet poor man my father.

Bass. One speak for both, what would you?

Laun. Serve you, Sir.

Gob. This is the very defect of the matter, Sir.

Bass. I know thee well, thou hast obtain'd thy suit;
Shylock, thy master, spoke with me this day,
And hath prefer'd thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich *Jew's* service to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master *Shylock* and you, Sir; you have the grace of God, Sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well; go father with thy son,
Take leave of thy old master, and enquire
My lodging out; give him a livery,
More guarded than his fellows: see it done.

Laun. Father in, I cannot get a service, no? I have ne'er a tongue in my head? well, if any man in *Italy* have a fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune; go to, here's a simple line or life, here's a small trifle of wives, alas, fifteen wives is nothing, eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming in for one man! and then to scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed, here are simple 'scapes! well, if fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this geer. Father come, I'll take my leave of the *Jew* in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Ex. Laun. and Gob.*]

Bass. I pray thee, good *Leonardo*, think on this;
These things being bought and orderly bestowed,

Rey

22 *The Merchant of Venice.*

Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best esteem'd acquaintance; hie thee, go.

Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

S C E N E III.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Where is your master?

Leon. Yonder, Sir, he walks.

Gra. Signior *Bassanio*.

Bass. *Gratiano*.

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtain'd it.

Gra. You must not deny me, I must go with you
to *Belmont*.

Bass. Why then you must: but hear thee, *Gratiano*,
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice,
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why there they shew
Something too liberal; pray thee take pain
T' allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour
I be misconstru'd in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior *Bassanio*, hear me,
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pockets, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say Amen;
Use all th' observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam; never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night, you shall not gage me
By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity.

I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment: but fare you well,
I have some business.

Gra. And I must to *Lorenzo* and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E IV.

Enter Jessica and Launcelot.

Jes. I'm sorry thou wilt leave my father so,
Our house is hel, and thou a merry devil
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness;
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee.
And *Launcelot*, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest;
Give him this letter, do it secretly,
And so farewell: I would not have my father
See me talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu; tears exhibit my tongue, most beautiful Pagan, most sweet *Jew!* if a Christian did not play the knave and get thee, I am much deceiv'd; but adieu, these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit: adieu. [Exit.

Jes. Farewel, good *Launcelot*.
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me,
To be asham'd to be my father's child?
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners: O *Lorenzo*,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a christian, and thy loving wife. [Exit.

S C E N E V.

Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Solarino, and Salanio.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time, disguise us at my lodging, and return all in an hour.

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

Sal. We have not spoke as yet of torch-bearers.

Sola. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered, and better in my mind not undertook.

Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock, we have two hours to furnish us. Friend *Launcelot*, what's the news?

Enter Launcelot with a letter.

Laun. And it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify.

Lor. I know the hand, in faith 'tis a fair hand,
And whiter than the paper it writ on

Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, Sir.

Lor. Whither goest thou ?

Laun. Marry, Sir, to bid my old master the *Jew* to sup to-night with my new master the christian.

Lor. Hold here, take this, tell gentle *Jessica* I will not fail her, speak it privately.
Go Gentlemen, will you prepare for this mask to-night ?
I am provided of a torch-bearer. [Exit *Laun.*

Sal. Ay marry, I'll be gone about it strait.

Sola. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and *Gratiano*

At *Gratiano's* lodging some hour hence.

Sal. 'Tis good we do so. [Exit.

Gra. Was not that letter from fair *Jessica* ?

Lor. I must needs tell thee all, she hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house,
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,
What page's suit she hath in readiness.

If e'er the *Jew* her father come to heav'n,
It will be for this gentle daughter's sake :
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless *Jew*.

Come, go with me, peruse this as thou goest,
Fair *Jessica* shall be my torch-bearer. [Exeunt.

S C E N E VI.

Enter Shylock and Launcelot.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old *Shylock* and *Bassanio*.

What *Jessica* ! thou shalt not gormandize
As thou hast done, with me——what *Jessica* ?
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out.

Why *Jessica*, I say.

Laun. Why *Jessica* !

Shy. Who bids thee call ? I did not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me I could
do nothing without bidding.

Enter

Enter Jessica.

Jes. Call you? what is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica,

There are my keys: but wherefore should I go?

I am not bid for love; they flatter me:

But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon

The prodigal christian. Jessica, my girl,

Look to my house, I am right loth to go,

There is some ill a brewing towards my rest,

For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun. I beseech you, Sir, go, my young master doth expect your reproach.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. And they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a mask; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a bleeding on black Monday last, at six a-clock i'th' morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year in the afternoon.

Shy. What are these masks? hear you me, Jessica,

Lock up my doors, and when you hear the drum,

And the vile squeaking of the wry-neck'd fife,

Clamber not you up to the casements then,

Nor thrust your head into the publick street

To gaze on christian fools with varnish'd faces:

But stop my house's ears, I mean my Casements,

Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter

My sober house. By Jacob's staff I swear,

I have no mind of feasting forth to-night;

But I will go; go you before me, sirrah:

Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, Sir.

Mistress, look out at a window for all this,

There will come a christian by,

Will be worth a Jewess' eye.

[Exit Laun.]

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's off spring? ha.

Jes. His words were, farewell mistress, nothing else.

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder:

Snail-slow in profit, but he sleeps by day

More than the wild cat; drones hive not with me

Therefore I part with him, and part with him

To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse. Well, *Jessica*, go in,
Perhaps I will return immediately;
Shut the doors after you, fast bind, fast find,
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [Exit.]

Jes. Farewel; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter' lost. [Exit.]

S C E N E VII.

Enter Gratiano and Salanio in masquerade.

Gra. This is the pent-house under which *Lorenzo*
desired us to make a stand.

Sal. His hour is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Sal. O ten times faster *Venus'* pidgeons fly
To * seal love's bonds new made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

Gra. That ever holds. Who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with th' unbated fire
That he did pace them first? all things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The skarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind?
How like the prodigal doth she return
With † over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind?

Enter Lorenzo.

Sal. Here comes *Lorenzo*: more of this hereafter.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode:
Not I, but my affairs have made you wait;
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then; come approach;
Here dwells my father *Jew*. Ho, who's within?
Jessica above in boy's cloaths.

Jes. Who are you? tell me for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

* steal.

† over-weather'd.

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes. Lorenzo certain, and my love indeed,
For who love I so much? and now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heav'n and thy thoughts are witnesses that thou art.

Jes. Here, catch his casket, it is worth the pains,
I'm glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange;
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shame?
They in themselves good-sooth are too too light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love,
And I should be obscur'd.

Lor. So are you sweet,
Ev'n in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once——

For the close night doth play the run-away,
And we are staid for at *Bassanio's* feast.

Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild my self
With some more ducats, and be with you strait

Gra. Now by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.

Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily,
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath prov'd her self;
And therefore like her self, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

Re-enter Jessica.

What, art thou come? on gentlemen, away;
Our masking mates by this time for us stay.

[*Exit.*

Enter Antonio.

Anth. Who's there?

Gra. Signior Antonio,

Anth. Fie, Gratiano, where are all the rest
'Tis nine a-clock, our friends all stay for you.
No mask to-night, the wind is come about,
Bassanio presently will go aboard,

I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

Gra. I'm glad on't, I desire no more delight,
Than to be under sail, and gone to-night. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VIII. BELMONT.

Enter Portia with Morocchius and both their Trains.

Por. Go, draw aside the curtains, and discover
The sev'ral caskets to this noble Prince.

Now make your choice. [*Three caskets are discover'd.*]

Mor. The first of gold, which this inscription bears,
Who chuseth me, shall gain what many men desire.

The second silver, which this promise carries,
Who chuseth me, shall get as much as he deserves.

This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
Who chuseth me, must give and hazard all he hath.

How shall I know if I do chuse the right?

Por. The one of them contains my picture, Prince,
If you chuse that, then I am yours withall.

Mor. Some God direct my judgment: let me see,
I will survey the inscriptions back again;

What says this leaden casket?

Who chuseth me, must give and hazard all he hath.

Must give, for what? for lead? hazard for lead.

This casket threatens. Men that hazard all,

Do it in hope of fair advantages:

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross,

I'll then not give nor hazard ought for lead?

What says the silver with her virgin hue?

Who chuseth me, shall get as much as he deserves.

As much as he deserves? pause there, *Morocchius,*

And weigh thy value with an even hand.

If thou be't rated by thy estimation

Thou dost deserve enough, and yet enough

May not extend so far as to the lady;

And yet to be afraid of my deserving,

Were but a weak disabling of my self,

As much as I deserve? ————— why that's the lady:

I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,

In graces, and in qualities of breeding:

But more than these, in love I do deserve.

What if I stray'd no farther, but chose here?

Let's see once more this saying grav'd in gold,
Who chuseth me, shall gain what many men desire.

Why that's the lady, all the world desires her:
From the four corners of the earth they come
To kiss this shrine, this mortal breathing saint.
Th' *Hircanian* desarts and the vastie wilds
Of wide *Arabia* are as thorough-fares now,
For Princes to come view fair *Portia*.

The wat'ry kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits, but they come
As o'er a brook, to see fair *Portia*.

One of these three contains her heav'nly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her? 'twere damnation
To think so base a thought: it were too gross
To rib her searcloth in the obscure grave.

Or shall I think in silver she's immur'd,
Being ten times undervalu'd to try'd gold?

O sinful thought, never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold! they have in *England*
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamped in gold, but that's insculpt upon:

But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. Deliver me the key;
Here do I chuse, and thrive I as I may.

Por. There take it, Prince, and if my form lie there
Then I am yours. [Unlocking the gold casket.]

Mor. O hell! what have we here, a carrion death,
Within whose empty eye there is a scrowl;
I'll read the writing.

*All that glisters is not gold,
Often have you heard that told;
Many a man his life hath sold,
But my outside to behold.
Gilded wood may worms infold:
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limb, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been inscol'd.
Fare you well, your suit is cold.*

Mer. Cold indeed, and labour lost :
Then farewell heat, and welcome frost :
Portia adieu, I have too griev'd a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part. [Exit.]

Por. A gentle riddance: draw the curtains, go,
Let all of his complexion chuse me so. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E IX. VENICE.

Enter Solarino and Salanio.

Sal. Why man, I saw *Bassanio* under sail,
With him is *Gratiano* gone along,
And in their ship I'm sure *Lorenzo* is not.

Sola. The villain *Jew* with outcries rais'd the Duke,
Who went with him to search *Bassanio's* ship.

Sal. He came too late, the ship was under sail ;
But there the Duke was giv'n to understand
That in a *Gondalo* were seen together
Lorenzo and his am'rous *Jessica* :

Besides, *Antonio* certify'd the Duke
They were not with *Bassanio* in his ship.

Sola. I never heard a passion so confus'd,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog *Jew* did utter in the streets ;
My daughter, O my ducats, O my daughter !
Fled with a christian ? O my christian ducats !
Justice, the law, my ducats, and my daughter !
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stoln from me by my daughter !
And jewels, two stones, rich and precious stones,
Stoln by my daughter ! justice ! find the girl ;
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats.

Sal. Why all the boys in *Venice* follow him,
Crying his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

Sola. Let good *Antonio* look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

Sal. Marry, well remember'd.
I reason'd with a *Frenchman* yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The *French* and *English*, there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught :

I thought upon *Antonio* when he told me,
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

Sola. You were best to tell *Antonio* what you hear,
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

Sal. A kinder Gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw *Bassanio* and *Antonio* part.

Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd, do not so,
Slobber not business for my sake, *Bassanio*,
But stay the very riping of the time ;
And for the *Jew's* bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love :

Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there.
And even there, his eye being hid with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wond'rous sensible
He wrung *Bassanio's* hand, and so they parted.

Sola. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee let us go and find him out,
And quicken his embraced heaviness
With some delight or other.

Sal. Do we so.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E X. BELMONT.

Enter Nerissa with a Servant.

Ner. Quick, quick, I pray thee, draw the curtain
strait,
The Prince of *Arragon* has ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently.

Enter Arragon, his train, Portia. Flor. Cornets.
The Caskets are discover'd.

Por. Behold there stand the caskets, noble Prince,
If you chuse that wherein I am contain'd,
Strait shall our nuptial rites be solemniz'd :
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

Ar. I am enjoind by oath t'observe three things ;
First, never to unfold to any one

Which casket 'twas I chose; next if I fail
 Of the right casket, never in my life
 To woo a maid in way of marriage:
 Last, if I fail in fortune of my choice,
 Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear
 That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Ar. And so have I address'd me, fortune now
 To my heart's hope; gold, silver, and base lead.
Who chuseth me, must give and hazard all he hath.
 You shall look fairer e'er I give or hazard.
 What says the golden chest? ha, let me see;
Who chuseth me, shall gain what many men desire.
 What many men desire——that may be meant
 Of the full multitude that chuse by show,
 Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
 Which pry not to th' interior, but like the martlet
 Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
 Ev'n in the force and road of casu'ity.
 I will not chuse what many men desire,
 Because I will not jump with common spirits,
 And rank me with the barb'rous multitudes.
 Why then to thee thou silver treasure-house:
 Tell me once more, what title thou dost bear?
Who chuseth me, shall get as much as he deserves;
 And well said too, for who shall go about
 To cozen fortune, and be honourable
 Without the stamp of merit? let none presume
 To wear an undeserved dignity:
 O that estates, degrees, and offices,
 Were not deriv'd corruptly, that clear honour
 Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer!
 How many then should cover that stand bare?
 How many be commanded that command?
 How much low peasantry would then be glean'd
 From the true seed of honour? how much honour
 Pickt from the chaff and ruin of the times,
 To be new varnish'd? well, but to my choice:
Who chuseth me, shall get as much as he deserves:
 I will assume desert; give me a key for this,
 And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

Por. Too long a pause for that which you find there.

[Unlocking the silver casket.]

Ar. What's here! the portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule? I will read it:

How much unlike art thou to *Portia*?

How much unlike my hopes and my deservings?

Who chuses me shall have as much as he deserves.

Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?

Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

Por. To offend and judge are distinct offices,
And of opposed natures.

Ar. What is here?

*The fire sev'n times tried this,
Sev'n times tried that judgment is,
That did never chuse amiss.*

*Some there be that shadows kifs,
Such have but a shadow's blifs:*

There be fools alive, I wis,

Silver'd o'er, and so was this:

Take what wife you will to bed,

I will ever be your head:

So be gone, Sir, you are sped.

Ar. Still more fool I shall appear

By the time I linger here:

With one fool's head I came to woo,

But I go away with two.

Sweet adieu, I'll keep my oath,

Patiently to bear my wroth.

[Exit.]

Por. Thus hath the candle findg'd the moth:

O these deliberate fools! when they do chuse,

They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy,

Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

Por. Come, draw the curtain, *Nerissa*.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Where is my lady?

Por. Here, what would my lord?

Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate

A young *Venetian*, one that comes before

To signify th' approaching of his lord,

From whom he bringeth sensible regrets;
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,
Gifts of rich value; yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love.

A day in *April* never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

Por. No more I pray thee; I am half afraid
Thou'lt say anon, he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him:
Come, come. *Nerissa*, for I long to see
Quick *Cupid's* post, that comes so mannerly.

Ner. Bassanio lord, Love! if thy will it be!

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T III. S C E N E I.

V E N I C E.

Enter Salanio and Solarino.

S O L A R I N O:

NOW, what news on the *Ryalto*?

Sal. Why yet it lives there unchecked, that
Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrackt on the
narrow seas; the *Goodwins*, I think they call the place;
a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcasses
of many a tall ship lie bury'd, as they say, if my
* *gossip Report* be an honest woman of her word.

Sola. I would she were as lying a gossip in that, as
ever knapt ginger, or made her neighbours believe she
wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true,
without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain
high-way of talk, that the good *Antonio*, the honest
Antonio——O that I had a title good enough to
keep his name company!

Sal. Come, the full stop.

Sola. Ha, what say'st thou? why the end is, he hath
lost a ship.

* *gossip's report.*

Sola.

Sal. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Sola. Let me say *Amen* betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer; for here he comes in the likeness of a *Jew*. How now *Shylock*, what news among the merchants?

Enter *Shylock*.

Shy. You knew (none so well, none so well as you) of my daughter's flight

Sal. That's certain; I for my part knew the taylor that made the wings she flew withal.

Sola. And *Shylock* for his own part knew the bird was fledg'd, and then it is the completion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damn'd for it.

Sal. That's certain, if the devil may be here judge:

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Sola. Out upon it, old carrion, rebels it at these * years?

Shy. I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood.

Sal. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers, than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods, than there is between red wine and rhenish: but tell us, do you hear whether *Antonio* have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match; a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dares scarce shew his head on the *Rialto*, a beggar that us'd to come so smug upon the mart! let him look to his bond; he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond; he was wont to lend money for a christian courtesie; let him look to his bond.

Sal. Why I am sure if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for;

Shy. To bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge; he hath disgrac'd me, and hinder'd me half a million, laugh'd at my losses, mockt at my gains, scorn'd my nation, thwarted my bargains, cool'd my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason; I am a *Jew*. Hath not a *Jew* eyes; hath not a *Jew* hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with

* times.

the

the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, heal'd by the same means, warm'd and cool'd by the same winter and summer as a christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a *Jew* wrong a christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a christian wrong a *Jew*, what should his sufferance be by christian example: why Revenge. The villany you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a servant from Anthonio.

Ser. Gentlemen, my master *Anthonio* is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

Sal. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter Tuball.

Sola. Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be match'd, unless the devil himself turn *Jew*.

[*Exeunt Sala. and Solar.*]

Sky. How now, *Tuball*, what news from *Genoua*? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Sky. Why there, there, there, there! a diamond gone cost me two thousand ducats in *Frankfort*! the curse never fell upon our nation 'till now, I never felt it 'till now? two thousand ducats in that, and other precious, precious jewels! I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! O would she were hers'd at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin. No news of them; why, so! and I know not what's spent in the search: why then loss upon loss; the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge, nor no ill luck stirring, but what lights o' my shoulders, no sighs but o' my breathing, no tears but o' my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too; *Anthonio*, as I heard in *Genoua*——

Sky. What, what, ill luck, ill luck?

Tub.

Tub. Hath an Argovie cast away, coming from *Tripolis*?

Sky. I thank God, thank God; is it true? is it true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wrack.

Sky. I thank thee, good *Tuball*; good news, good news; ha, ha, where? in *Genoua*?

Tub. Your daughter spent in *Genoua*, as I heard, one night fourscore ducats.

Sky. Thou stick'st a dagger in me; I shall never see my gold again; fourscore ducats at a sitting, fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of *Anthonio's* creditors in my company to *Venice*, that swear he cannot chuse but break.

Sky. I am glad of it, I'll plague him, I'll torture him; I'm glad of it.

Tub. One of them shew'd me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Sky. Out upon her, thou torturest me, *Tuball*; it was my *Turquoise*, I had it of *Leah* when I was a bachelor; I would not have given it for a wilderness of monnies.

Tub. But *Anthonio* is certainly undone.

Sky. Nay, that's true, that's very true; go see me an officer, bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for were he out of *Venice*, I can make what merchandize I will: go, go *Tuball*, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good *Tuball*; at our synagogue, *Tuball*. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E II. BELMONT.

Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, and Attendants.

The Caskets are set out.

Por. I pray you tarry, pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for in chusing wrong
I lose your company; forbear a while.
There's something tells me (but it is not love)
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.

But lest you should not understand me well,
 And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,
 I would detain you here some month or two,
 Before you venture for me. I could teach you
 How to chuse right, but I am then forsworn:
 So will I never be, so may you miss me;
 But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
 That I had been forsworn. Beswore your eyes,
 They have o'erlook'd me, and divided me;
 One half of me is yours, the other half
 Mine own, I would say: but if mine, then yours;
 And so all yours. Alas! these naughty times
 Put bars between the owners and their rights:
 And so tho' yours, not yours; prove it so,
 Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
 I speak too long, but 'tis to piece the time;
 To eche it out, and draw it out in length,
 To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me chuse:

For as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por. Upon the rack, *Bassanio*? then confess
 What treason there is mingled with your love?

Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
 Which makes me fear th' enjoying of my love:
 There may as well be amity and life
 'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
 Where men enforced do speak any thing.

Bass. Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

Por. Well then, confess and live.

Bass. Confess and love

Had been the very sum of my confession.

O happy torment, when my torturer
 Doth teach me answers for deliverance!

But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por. Away then. I am lockt in one of them;
 If you do love me, you will find me out.

Nerissa and the rest stand all aloof,

Let musick sound while he doth make his choice;

Then if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,

Fading in musick. That the comparison

May stand more just, my eye shall be the stream.
And wat'ry death-bed for him : he may win,
And what is musick then ? then musick is
Even as the flourish, when true subjects bow
To a new crowned monarch: such it is,
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day,
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes
With no less presence but with much more love,
Than young *Alcides*, when he did redeem
The virgin-tribute paid by howling *Troy*
To the sea monster : I stand for sacrifice ;
The rest aloof are the *Dardanian* wives,
With bleared visages came forth to view
The issue of th' exploit. Go *Hercules*,
Live thou, I live ; with much, much more dismay
I view the fight, than thou that mak'st the fray.

[*Musick within.*

A Song whilst Bassanio comments on the caskets to himself.

*Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head ?
How begot, how nourished ?*

Reply, reply.

*It is engender'd in the eye,
With gazing fed, and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies :*

Let us all ring fancy's knell.

I'll begin it.

Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves:
The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.
In law what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil ? in religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament ?
There is no vice so simple, but assumes

Some mark of virtue, on his outward parts.
 How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
 As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
 The beards of *Hercules* and frowning *Mars*;
 Who inward searcht, have livers white as milk?
 And these assume but valour's excrement,
 To render them redoubted. Look on beauty,
 And you shall see 'tis purchas'd by the weight,
 Which therein works a miracle in nature,
 Making them lightest that wear most of it:
 So are those crisped snaky golden locks
 Which make such wanton gambols with the wind
 Upon supposed fairness, often known
 To be the dowry of a second head,
 The skull that bred them, in the sepulchre.
 Thus Ornament is but the gilded shore
 To a most dang'rous sea; the beautiful scarf
 Veiling an *Indian* beauty; in a word,
 The seeming truth which cunning times put on
 T' entrap the wisest. Then thou gaudy gold,
 Hard food for *Midas*, I will none of thee:
 Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
 'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meager lead,
 Which rather threatnest than dost promise aught;
 Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence,
 And here chuse I, joy be the consequence.

Por. How all the other passions fleet to air,
 As doubtful thoughts and rash embrac'd despair,
 And shudd'ring fear, and green-ey'd jealousy,
 O love be moderate, allay thy ecstasie;
 In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess,
 I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,
 For fear I surfeit. [Opening the leaden cask.]

Bass. What find I here?
 Fair *Portia's* counterfeit? what Demy-god
 Hath come so near creation? move these eyes?
 Or whether riding on the balls of mine
 Seem they in motion? here are sever'd lips,
 Parted with sugar'd breath; so sweet a bar
 Should sunder such sweet friends: here in her hairs
 The painter plays the spider, and hath woven

A golden mesh t' intrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes,
How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks it should have pow'r to steal both his,
And leave it self * unfinish'd: yet how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow,
In underprising it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the scrowl,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

*You that chuse not by the view,
Chance as fair, and chuse as true:
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content, and seek no new.
If you be well pleas'd with this,
And hold your fortune for your blis,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.*

A gentle scrowl; fair lady, by your leave, [*Kissing her.*]
I come by note to give, and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes;
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, gazing still in doubt,
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So (thrice fair lady) stand I, even so,
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratify'd by you.

Por. You see, my lord *Bassanio*, where I stand,
Such as I am; tho' for my self alone,
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish my self much better; yet for you,
I would be trebled twenty times my self,
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich, that to stand high in your account
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account: but the full sum of me
Is sum of nothing, which to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd,
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; more happy than in this,

* *unfurnish'd.*

She

She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
 Happiest of all is, that her gentle spirit
 Commits itself to yours to be directed,
 As from her lord, her governor, her king:
 Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours
 Is now converted. I but now was lady
 Of this fair mansion, mistress of my servants,
 Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now
 This house, these servants, and this same myself
 Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring,
 Which when you part from, lose or give away,
 Let it presage the ruin of your love,
 And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
 Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
 And there is such confusion in my pow'rs,
 As after some oration fairly spoke
 By a beloved prince, there doth appear
 Among the buzzing pleased multitude,
 Where every something being blent together,
 Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy
 Express'd, and not express'd. But when this ring
 Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;
 O then be bold to say, *Bassanio's* dead.

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
 That have stood by, and seen our wishes prosper,
 To cry good joy, good joy, my lord and lady.

Gra. My lord *Bassanio*, and my gentle lady,
 I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
 For I am sure you can wish none for me:
 And when your honours mean to solemnize
 The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you
 Ev'n at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
 My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
 You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
 You lov'd; I lov'd for intermission.
 No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
 Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
 And so did mine too as the matter falls:

For wooing here until I sweat again,
 And swearing 'till my very roof was dry,
 With oaths of love at last, if promise last,
 I got a promise of this fair one here,
 To have her love, provided that your fortune
 Achiev'd her mistress.

Por. Is this true, *Nerissa*?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleas'd withal.

Bass. And do you, *Gratiano*, mean good faith?

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

[riage:

Bass. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your mar-

Gra. We'll play with them, the first boy for a thou-

and ducats.

Ner. What, and stake down?

Gra. No, we shall ne'er win at that sport, and stake
 down.

But who comes here? *Lorenzo* and his infidel?

What, and my old *Venetian* friend, *Salanio*?

S C E N E III.

Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, and Salanio.

Bass. *Lorenzo* and *Salanio*, welcome hither,

If that the youth of my new interest here
 Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave
 I bid my very friends and country-men,
 (Sweet *Portia*) welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord; they are intirely welcome.

Lor. I thank your honour: for my part, my lord,

My purpose was not to have seen you here,
 But meeting with *Salanio* by the way
 He did intreat me past all saying nay
 To come with him along.

Sal. I did, my lord,

And I have reason for't; Signior *Antonio*
 Commends him to you.

Bass. E'er I ope his letter,

I pray you tell me how my good friend doth.

Sal. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind:

Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
 Will shew you his estate.

Bassanio opens the letter.

Gra. Nerissa, cheer yond stranger. Bid her welcome.
Your hand, *Salanio*; what's the news from *Venice*?
How doth that royal merchant, good *Antonio*?
I know he will be glad of our success:
We are the *Jasons*, we have won the fleece.

Sal. Would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.

Por. There are some shrewd contents in yond same paper,

That steal the colour from *Bassanio's* cheek:
Some dear friend dead, else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, *Bassanio*, I am half yourself,
And I must have the half of any thing
That this same paper brings you.

Bass. O sweet *Portia*!

Here are a few of the unpleasant't words
That ever blotted paper. Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true; and yet dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing you shall see
How much I was a braggart: when I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing. For indeed
I have engag'd myself to a dear friend;
Engag'd my friend to his meer enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady,
The paper is the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, *Salanio*?
Have all his ventures fail'd? what, not one hit
From *Tripolis*, from *Mexico*, from *England*,
From *Lisbon*, *Barbary*, and *India*?
And not one vessel 'scap'd the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Sal. Not one, my lord.

Besides it should appear, that if he had

The present money to discharge the Jew,
 He would not take it. Never did I know
 A creature that did bear the shape of man,
 So keen and greedy to confound a man.
 He plies the Duke at morning and at night,
 And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
 If they deny him justice. Twenty merchants,
 The Duke himself, and the Magnificoes
 Of greatest port have all persuaded with him,
 But none can drive him from the envious plea
 Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Jes. When I was with him, I have heard him swear,
 To *Tuball* and to *Chus* his country-men,
 That he would rather have *Antonio's* flesh,
 Than twenty times the value of the sum
 That he did owe him; and I know, my lord,
 If law, authority, and pow'r deny not,
 It will go hard with poor *Antonio*.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
 The best-condition'd and unweari'd spirit
 In doing courtesies; and one in whom
 The ancient *Roman* honour more appears
 Than any that draws breath in *Italy*.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
 Double six thousand, and then treble that,
 Before a friend of this description
 Shall lose a hair through my *Bassanio's* fault.
 First go with me to church, and call me wife,
 And then away to *Venice* to your friend:
 For never shall you lie by *Portia's* side
 With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
 To pay the petty debt twenty times over.
 When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
 My maid *Nerissa* and myself mean time
 Will live as maids and widows: come away,

For

For you shall hence upon your wedding-day.*
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. reads. Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all mis-
carry'd, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low,
my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it
is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between
you and me, if I might but see you at my death; not
withstanding use your pleasure: if your love do not per-
suade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love! dispatch all business, and be gone.

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste; but till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [Exit

S C E N E IV. VENICE.

Enter Shylock, Solariao, Anthonio, and the Goaler.

Shy. Goaler, look to him: tell not me of mercy,
This is the fool that lent out money gratis.
Goealer, look to him.

Ant. Here me yet, good *Shylock*.

Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:
I've sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty goaler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.

Ant. I pray thee hear me speak.

Shy. I'll have my bond: I will not hear thee speak:
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more;
I'll not be made a soft and dull-ey'd fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh and yield

* — your wedding-day.

Bid your friends welcome, shew a merry cheer;
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear, &c.

To christian intercessors. Follow not ;
I'll have no speaking ; I will have my bond.

[*Exit Shylock.*

Sola. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

Ant. Let him alone,
I'll follow him no more with bootless pray'rs :
He seeks my life ; his reason well I know ;
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me ;
Therefore he hates me.

Sola. I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

Ant. The Duke cannot deny the course of law ;
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in *Venice*, if it be deny'd,
Will much impeach the justice of the state,
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore go,
These griefs and losses have so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, goaler, on ; pray God *Bassanio* come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not ! [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E V. BELMONT.

Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, and a servant of Portia's.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of God-like amity, which appears strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you shew this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief to,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work,
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent of doing good,
And shall not now ; for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,

Whose

Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
 There must be needs a like proportion
 Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit;
 Which makes me think that this *Antonio*,
 Being the bosom-lover of my lord,
 Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
 How little is the cost I have bestow'd
 In purchasing the semblance of my soul
 From out the state of hellish cruelty?
 This comes too near the praising of myself;
 Therefore no more of it: here other things,
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands,
 The husbandry and manage of my house,
 Until my lord's return. For mine own part,
 I have tow'rd heaven breath'd a secret vow,
 To live in prayer and contemplation,
 Only attended by *Nerissa* here,
 Until her husband and my lord's return.
 There is a monastery two miles off,
 And there we will abide. I do desire you
 Not to deny this imposition,
 The which my love and some necessity
 Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart,
 I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
 And will acknowledge you and *Jessica*
 In place of lord *Bassanio* and myself.
 So fare you well, 'till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you.

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Per. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleas'd
 To wish it back on you: fare you well, *Jessica*.

[*Exeunt Jes. and Lor.*]

Now, *Balthazar*,

As I have ever found thee honest, true,
 So let me find thee still: take this same letter,
 And use thou all the endeavours of a man,
 In speed to *Mantua*; see thou render this
 Into my cousin's hand, doctor *Bellarion*,
 And look what notes and garments he doth give thee,
 Bring

Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd speed
Unto the Traject, to the common ferry
Which trades to *Venice*: waste no time in words,
But get thee gone; I shall be there before thee.

Bal. Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [*Exit.*

Por. Come on, *Nerissa*, I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner. Shall they see us?

Por. They shall, *Nerissa*; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With what we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both apparell'd like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace;
' And speak between the change of man and boy,
' With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps
' Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
' Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lyes,
' How honourable ladies sought my love,
' Which I denying, they fell sick and dy'd,
' I could not do with all: then I'll repent,
' And wish for all that, that I had not kill'd them,
' And twenty of these puny lyes I'll tell;
' That men shall swear I've discontinu'd school
' Above a twelve-month: I have in my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging jacks,
Which I will practise.

Ner. Shall we turn to men?

Por. Fy, what a question's that,
If thou wert near a lewd interpreter?
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park-gate; and therefore halte away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E VI.

Enter Launcelot and Jessica.

Laun. Yes, truly: for look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children; therefore I promise you, I fear you. I was always plain with you:

and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer; for truly I think you are damn'd: there is but one hope in it that can do you any good, and that is but a kind of bastard-hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the *Jew's* daughter.

Jes. That were a kind of bastard-hope indeed; so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then I fear you are damn'd both by father and mother; thus when you shun *Scylla*, your father, you fall into *Charibdis*, your mother: well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a christian.

Laun. Truly the more to blame he; we were christians enough before, e'en as many as could well live one by another: this making of christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for mony.

Enter Lorenzo.

Jes. I'll tell my husband, *Launcelot*, what you say: here he comes.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, *Launcelot*, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, *Lorenzo*; *Launcelot* and I are out; he tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heav'n, because I am a *Jew's* daughter: and he says, you are no good member of the common-wealth; for in converting *Jews* to christians, you raise the price of pork.

Lor. I shall answer that better to the common-wealth than you can the getting up of the negro's belly: the *Moor* is with child by you; *Launcelot*.

Laun. It is much that the *Moor* should be more than reason: but if she be less than an honest woman, she is indeed more than I took her for.

Lor. How every fool can play upon the word! think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence,

lence, and discourse grow commendable in none but parrots. Go in, sirrah, bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, Sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Good lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, Sir; only cover is the word.

Lor. Will you cover then, Sir?

Laun. Not so, Sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! wilt thou shew the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows, bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, Sir, it shall be serv'd in; for the meat, Sir, it shall be covered; for you coming in to dinner, Sir, why let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [Exit. Laun.]

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!

‘ The fool hath planted in his memory
‘ An army of good words; and I do know
‘ A many fools that stand in better place,
‘ Garnish’d like him, that for a trickie word
‘ Desie the matter: how far’st thou, *Jessica*?

And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the lord *Bassanio*’s wife?

Jes. Past all expressing: it is very meet
The lord *Bassanio* live an upright life.

For having such a Blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth:

And if on earth he do not * merit it,

|| In reason he should never come to heav’n.

Why, if two Gods should play some heav’nly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women.

And *Portia* one, there must be something else
Pawn’d with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me, as she is for a wife,

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

Lor. I will anon: first let us go to dinner.

Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.

Lor. No, pray thee, let it servè for table-talk;
Then howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things,
I shall digest it.

Jes. Well, I'll set you forth. [Exeunt.]

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

V E N I C E.

*Enter the Duke, the Senators, Anthonio, Bassanio,
and Gratiano.*

D U K E.

W H A T, is *Anthonio* here?

Ant. Ready, so please your Grace.

Duke. I'm sorry for thee, thou art come to answer
A stony Adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of Pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

Ant. I have heard
Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualifie
His rig'rous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer with a quietness of spirit
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke. Go on, and call the *Jew* into the court.

Sal. He's ready at the door: he comes, my Lord.

Enter Shylock.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act, and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt shew thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty.
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only lose the forfeiture,

But

But touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses
'That have of late so huddled on his back;
Enough to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms, and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn *Turks* and *Tartars*, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesie.

We all expect a gentle answer, *Jew*.

Sby. I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose,
And by our holy *Sabbath* have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter, and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me why I rather chuse to have
A weight of carrion flesh, than to receive
Three thousand ducats? I'll not answer that.
But say it is my humour, is it answered?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleas'd to give ten thousand ducats
To have it bane'd? what, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are, love not a gaping pig,
Some that are mad if they behold a cat,
And others, when the bag-pipe sings i'th nose,
Cannot contain their urine for affection.
Masterless passion sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loaths. Now for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig,
Why he a harmless necessary cat,
Why he a woollen bag-pipe, but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame,
As to offend, himself being offended;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodg'd hate and a certain loathing
I bear *Antonio*, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
T'excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Sby. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

34 *The Merchant of Venice.*

Bass. Do all men kill the thing they do not love?

Sby. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Ev'ry offence is not a hate at first.

Sby. What would'st thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant. I pray you think you question with a *Jew*.

You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height.

* You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb?

You may as well forbid the mountain-pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise
When they are fretted with the gusts of heav'n.

You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that (than which what's harder?)
His *Jewish* heart. Therefore I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgment, and the *Jew* his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Sby. If ev'ry ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and ev'ry part a ducat,
I would not draw them, I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend'ring none?

Sby. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchas'd slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish part,
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat thy under burdens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their pallats
Be season'd with such viands: you will answer,
The slaves are ours. So do I answer you.
The pound of flesh which I demand of him
Is dearly bought, 'tis mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law,
There is no force in the decrees of *Venice*:
I stand for judgment; answer; shall I have it?

Duke.

* You may as well use question with the wolf.

The ewe bleat for the lamb, you may as well, &c.

Duke. Upon my pow'r I may dismiss this court,
Unless *Bellarion*, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Sal. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from *Padua*.

Duke. Bring us the letters, call the messengers.

Bass. Good cheer, *Antonio*; what man, courage yet?
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
You cannot better be employ'd, *Bassanio*,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

S C E N E II.

Enter Nerissa dress'd like a Lawyer's Clerk.

Duke. Came you from *Padua*, from *Bellarion*?

Ner. From both, my lord: *Bellarion* greets your Grace.

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Sby. To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.

Gra. Not on thy soul! but on thy soul, harsh Jew;
Thou mak'st thy knife keen; for no metal can,
No not the hangman's ax, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

Sby. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

Gra. O be thou damn'd, inexorable dog,
And for thy life let justice be accus'd.
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with *Pythagoras*,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who hang'd for human slaughter,
Ev'n from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And whil'st thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infus'd it self in thee: for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd, and ravenous.

Sby. 'Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud.

Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To careless ruin. I stand here for law.

Duke. This letter from *Bellario* doth commend
A young and learned doctor in our court.
Where is he?

Ner. He attendeth here hard by
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him?

Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go, give him courteous conduct to this place:
Mean time the court shall hear *Bellario's* letter.

YOUR Grace shall understand, that at the receipt
of your letter, I am very sick: but at the instant
that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with
me a young doctor of Rome, his name is Balthasar: I
acquainted him with the cause in controversy between
the Jew and Anthonio the merchant. We turn'd o'er
many books together: he is furnished with my opinion,
which bettered with his own learning, (the greatness
whereof I cannot enough commend,) comes with him at
my impertunity, to fill up your Grace's request in my
stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment
to let him lack a reverend estimation: For I never
knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him
to your gracious acceptance, whose tryal shall better pub-
lish his commendation.

Enter Portia, dress'd like a Doctor of Laws.

Duke. You hear the learn'd *Bellario* what he writes,
And here, I take it, is the doctor come:
Give me your hand. Came you from old *Bellario*?

Per. I did, my lord.

Duke. You're welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

Per. I am informed throughly of the case.

Which is the merchant here? and which the Jew?

Duke. *Anthonio* and old *Shylock*, both stand forth.

Per. Is your name *Shylock*?

Shy. *Shylock* is my name.

Per. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow,
Yet in such rule, that the *Venetian* law

Cannot impugn you, as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not? [To Anth.

Ant. Ay, so he says.

Por. Do you confess the bond?

Ant. I do.

Por. Then must the *Jew* be merciful.

Sby. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
'T droppeth as the gentle rain from heav'n
' Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd,
' It blesteth him that gives, and him that takes,
' 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest, it becomes
' The throned monarch better than his crown:
' His scepter shews the force of temporal pow'r,
' The attribute to awe and majesty,
' Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of Kings;
' But mercy is above this scepter'd sway,
' It is enthroned in the hearts of Kings,
' It is an attribute to God himself;
' And earthly power doth then shew likest God's,
' When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, *Jew*,
Tho' justice be thy plea, consider this,
That in the courie of justice none of us
Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy,
And that same pray'r doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of *Venice*
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Sby. My deeds upon my head. I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the mony?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court,
Yea, twice the sum; if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you
Wrest once the law to your authority.
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be, there is no pow'r in *Venice*
Can alter a decree established.

'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

Sby. A *Daniel* come to judgment! yea, a *Daniel*.
O wise young judge, how do I honour thee!

Por. I pray you let me look upon the bond.

Sby. Here 'tis, most rev'rend doctor, here it is.

Por. *Shylock*, there's thrice thy mony offer'd thee.

Sby. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heav'n.

Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?

No, not for *Venice*.

Por. Why, this bond is forfeit,
And lawfully by this the *Jew* may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful,
Take thrice the mony, bid me tear the bond.

Sby. When it is paid according to the tenure.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound. I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear,
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.

Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

Por. Why then thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

Sby. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Sby. 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge,
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Sby. Ay, his breast,
So says the bond, doth it not, noble judge?
Nearest his heart, those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there scales to weigh the flesh?

Sby. I have them ready.

Por. Have by some surgeon, *Sbylock*, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he should bleed to death.

Sby. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Por. It is not so express'd; but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Sby. I cannot find it, 'tis not in the bond.

Por. Come, merchant, have you any thing to say?

Ant. But little: I am arm'd and well prepar'd.
Give me your hand, *Bassanio*, fare you well.
Grieve not that I am fall'n to this for you:
For herein fortune shews her self more kind
Than is her custom. It is still her use
To let the wretched man out-live his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty. From which ling'ring penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honourable wife;
Tell her the process of *Anthony's* end;
Say how I lov'd you; speak me fair in death:
And when the tale is told, bid her be judge,
Whether *Bessanio* had not once a love.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

Bass. *Anthony*, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life it self;
But life it self, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life.
I would lose all, ay sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by to hear you make the offer.

Gra. I have a wife whom I protest I love,
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Intreat some pow'r to change this currish Jew.

Ner. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back,
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

Sby. These be the christian husbands. I've a daughter,
Would any of the stock of *Barrabas*
Had been her husband, rather than a christian! [*Aside.*
We trifle time, I pray thee pursue sentence.

Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine,
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Sby. Most rightful judge!

Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast,
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Sby. Most learned judge! a sentence: come, prepare.

Por. Tarry a little, there is someth'g else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood,
The words expressly are a pound of flesh.
Then take thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But in the cutting it if thou dost shed
One drop of christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are by the laws of *Venice* confiscate
Unto the state of *Venice*.

Gra. O upright judge! mark *Jew*, O learned judge!

Sby. Is that the law?

Por. Thy self shalt see the act:
For as thou urgest justice, be assur'd
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st.

Gra. O learned judge! mark *Jew*, a learned judge!

Sby. I take this offer then, pay the bond thrice,
And let the christian go.

Bass. Here is the money.

Por. The *Jew* shall have all justice; soft, no haste,
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra. O *Jew*! an upright judge, a learned judge!

Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh,
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more
Or less than a just pound, be't but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple; nay, if the scale turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou die'st, and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gra. A second *Daniel*, a *Daniel*, *Jew*,
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

Por. Why doth the *Jew* pause? take the forfeiture.

Sby. Give me my principal, and let me go.

Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.

Por. He hath refus'd it in the open court;
He shall have meerly justice and his bond.

Gra. A *Daniel* still say I, a second *Daniel*!
I thank thee, *Jew*, for teaching me that word.

Sby. Shall I not barely have my principal?

Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, *Jew*.

Sby. Why then the devil give him good of it;]
I'll stay no longer question.

Por. Tarry, *Jew*.

The law hath yet another hold on you:
It is enacted in the laws of *Venice*,
If it be prov'd against an alien,
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize on half his goods, the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice:
In which predicament I say thou stand'st.
For it appears by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contriv'd against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehears'd.
Down therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

Gra. Beg that thou may'st have leave to hang thy
self;

And yet thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord,
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou may'st see the difference of our spirit,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is *Antonio's*;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Por. Ay for the state, not for *Antonio*.

Sby. Nay take my life and all, pardon not that.
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house: you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, *Antonio*?

Gra.

Gra. A halter *gratis*, nothing else for God's sake.

Ant. So please my lord the Duke, and all the court,
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it
Upon his death unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter.
Two things provided more, that for this favour
He presently become a christian;
The other, that he do record a gift
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son *Lorenzo* and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Por. Art thou contented, *Jew*? what dost thou say?

Sby. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Sby. I pray you give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well; send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra. In christ'ning thou shalt have two godfathers.
Had I been judge, thou should'it have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit Shylock.*

Duke. Sir, I intreat you home with me to dinner.

Por. I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon;
I must away this night to *Padua*,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I'm sorry that your leisure serves you not,
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For in my mind you are much bound to him.

[*Ex. Duke and his train.*

S C E N E III.

Bass. Most worthy gentleman! I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties, in-lieu whereof
Three thousand ducats due unto the *Jew*
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

Ant. And stand indebted over and above
In love and service to you evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfy'd,
And I delivering you am satisfy'd,
And therein do account my self well paid;
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you know me when we meet again,
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Bass. Dear Sir, of force I must attempt you further.
Take some remembrance of us for a tribute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things; I pray you
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake,
And for your love I'll take this ring from you.
Do not draw back your hand, I'll take no more,
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass. This ring, good Sir, alas it is a trifle;
I will not shame my self to give you this.

Por. I will have nothing else but only this,
And now methinks I have a mind to it.

Bass. There's more than this depends upon the value.
The dearest ring in *Venice* will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation;
Only for this I pray you pardon me.

Por. I see, Sir, you are liberal in offers;
You taught me first to beg, and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

Bass. Good Sir, this ring was giv'n me by my wife.
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell, nor give, nor lose it.

Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts?
And if your wife be not a mad woman,
And know how well I have deserv'd the ring,
She wou'd not hold out enmity for ever
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you. [*Exit.*]

Anth. My lord *Bassanio* let him have the ring,
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valu'd 'gainst your wife's commandement.

Bass. Go, *Gratiano*, run and overtake him,
Give him the ring, and bring him if thou can't
Unto *Antonio's* house: away, make haste. [*Exit Gra.*]
Come, you and I will thither presently,

And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward *Belmont*; come, *Antonio*. [Exeunt.]

Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. Enquire the *Jew's* house out, give him this deed,
And let him sign it; we'll away to-night,
And be a day before our husbands home:
This deed will be well welcome to *Lorenzo*.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Fair Sir, you are well o'erta'en:
My lord *Bassanio*, upon more advice,
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth intreat
Your company at dinner.

Por. That cannot be.

This ring I do accept most thankfully,
And so I pray you tell him: furthermore,
I pray you shew my Youth old *Shylock's* house.

Gra. That will I do.

Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.
I'll see if I can get my husband's ring, [To *Por.*
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

Por. Thou may'st, I warrant. We shall have old
swearing,
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we'll out-face them and out-swear them too.
Away, make haste, thou know'st where I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good Sir, will you shew me to this
house? [Exeunt.]

A C T V. S C E N E I.

B E L M O N T.

Enter Lorenzo and Jessica.

L O R E N Z O.

TH E moon shines bright: In such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise; in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the *Trojan* wall
And sigh'd his soul toward the *Grecian* tents,
Where *Cressid* lay that night.

Jes. In such a night,
Did *Thisbe* fearfully o'er-trip the dew,
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismay'd away.

Lor. In such a night,
Stood *Dido* with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waft her love
To come again to *Carthage*.

Jes. In such a night,
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old *Æson*.

Lor. In such a night,
Did *Jessica* steal from the wealthy *Few*,
And with an unthrift love did run from *Venice*,
As far as *Belmont*.

Jes. And in such a night,
Did youg *Lorenzo* swear he lov'd her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. And in such a night,
Did pretty *Jessica* (like a little shrew)
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jes. I would out-night you, did no body come:
But hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter Messenger.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

Mes. A friend.

Lor. What friend? your name; I pray you, friend?

Mes. *Stephano* is my name, and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at *Belmont*: she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor. Who comes with her?

Mes. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

Lor. He is not, nor have we yet heard from him:
But go we in, I pray thee, *Jessica*,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter Launcelot.

Laun. Sola, sola; wo ha, ho, sola, sola,

Lor.

Lor. Who calls?

Laun. Sola, did you see master *Lorenzo* and mistress *Lorenza*? sola, sola.

Lor. Leave hollowing, man: here.

Laun. Sola, where? where?

Lor. Here.

Laun. Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news. My master will be here ere morning.

Lor. Sweet love, let's in, and there expect their coming.

And yet no matter: why should we go in?

My friend *Stephano*, signifie, I pray you,

Within the house your mistress is at hand,

And bring your musick forth into the air.

How sweet the moon-light sleeps upon this bank;

Here will we sit, and let the sounds of musick

Creep in our ears; soft stillness, and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, *Jessica*; look how the floor of heav'n

Is thick inlay'd with patterns of bright gold;

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,

But in his motion like an angel sings,

Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubims;

Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it.

Come ho, and wake *Diana* with a hymn,

With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,

And draw her home with musick.

Jes. I'm never merry when I hear sweet musick.

Musick.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive;

For do but note a wild and wanton herd,

Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,

Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,

(Which is the hot condition of their blood)

If they perchance but hear a trumpet sound,

Or any air of musick touch their ears,

You shall perceive them make a mutual stand;

Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze

By the sweet power of musick. Thus the Poet

The Merchant of Venice. 67

‘ Did feign that *Orpheus* drew trees, stones, and floods ;
‘ Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
‘ But musick for the time doth change his nature.
‘ The man that hath no musick in himself,
‘ And is not mov’d with concord of sweet sounds,
‘ Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils ;
‘ The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
‘ And his affections dark as *Erebus* :
‘ Let no such man be trusted——Mark the musick.

Enter Portia and Nerissa

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall :
How far that little candle throws his beams !
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Ner. When the moon shone we did not see the candle.

Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less ;

A substitute shines brightly as a King

Until a King be by ; and then his state

Empties it self, as doth an inland brook

Into the main of waters. Musick, hark ! [*Musick.*]

Ner. It is the musick, madam, of your house.

Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect :
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

Ner. Silence bestows the virtue on it, madam.

Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended ; and I think

The nightingale, if she should sing by day,

When every goose is cackling, would be thought

No better a musician than the wren.

How many things by season season’d are

‘To their right praise and true perfection ?

Peace ! how the moon sleeps with *Endimion*,

And would not be awaked !

Musick ceases.

Lor. That is the voice,

Or I am much deceiv’d, of *Portia*.

Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the
cuckow,

By the bad voice.

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.

Por. We have been praying for our husbands healths,
Which

Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they return'd?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signifie their coming.

Por. Go *Nerissa*,
Give order to my servants, that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence,
Nor you *Lorenzo*, *Jessica* nor you.

A tucket sounds.

Lor. Your husband is at hand, I hear his trumpet:
We are no tell-tales, madam, fear you not.

Por. This night methinks is but the day-light sick;
It looks a little paler; 'tis a day,
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Enter Bassanio, Anthonio, Gratiano, and their followers.

Bass. We should hold day with the *Antipodes*,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be *Bassanio* so from me;
But God fort all: you're welcome home, my lord.

Bass. I thank you, madam: give welcome to my friend?
This is the man, this is *Anthonio*,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him;
For as I hear he was much bound for you.

Anth. No more than I am well acquitted of.

Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house;
It must appear in other ways than words;
'Therefore I scant this breathing courtesie.

Gra. By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith I gave it to the judge's clerk. [*To Nerissa.*]
Would he were gelt that had it for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.

Por. A quarrel, hœ, already! what's the matter?

Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me, whose poesie was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife; *Love me, and leave me not.*

Ner. What talk you of the poesie or the value?

You

You swore to me when I did give it you,
That you would wear it 'till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave :
Tho' not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Gave it a Judge's clerk ! but well I know
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man.

Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

Gra. Now by this hand I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,
No higher than thy self, the Judge's clerk,
A prating boy that begg'd it as a fee :
I could not for my heart deny it him.

Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift,
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,
And riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it ; and here he stands,
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it,
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now in faith, *Gratiano*,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief ;
An 'twere to me I should be mad at it.

Bass. Why I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

Gra. My lord *Bassanio* gave his ring away
Unto the Judge that begg'd it, and indeed
Deserv'd it too ; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine,
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

Por. What ring gave you, my lord ?
Not that I hope which you receiv'd of me.

Bass. If I could add a lye unto a fault,
I would deny it ; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it, it is gone,

Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth,
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed
Until I see the ring.

Ner. Nor I in yours 'till I again see mine.

Bass. Sweet *Portia*,

If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
 If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
 And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
 And how unwillingly I left the ring,
 When nought would be accepted but the ring,
 You would abate the strength of your displeasure,

Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
 Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
 Or your own honour to retain the ring,
 You would not then have parted with the ring.
 What man is there so much unreasonable,
 If you had pleas'd to have defended it
 With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
 To urge the thing held as a ceremony?

Nerissa teaches me what to believe;
 I'll die for't; but some woman had the ring.

Bass. No, by mine honour, madam, by my soul,
 No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
 Who did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
 And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,
 And suffer'd him to go displeas'd away;
 Ev'n he that did uphold the very life
 Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
 I was enforc'd to send it after him:
 I was beset with shame and courtesie;
 My honour would not let ingratitude
 So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady,
 And by these blessed candles of the night,
 Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
 The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

Por. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house,
 Since he hath got the jewel that I lov'd,
 And that which you did swear to keep for me:
 I will become as liberal as you,
 I'll not deny him any thing I have,
 No, not my body, nor my husband's bed;
 Know him I shall, I am well sure of it.
 Lie not a night from home; watch me like *Argus*;
 If you do not, if I be left alone,
 Now by mine honour, which is yet mine own,
 I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

Ner. And I his clerk; therefore be well advis'd
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

Gra. Well, do you so; let me not take him then;
For if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

Ant. I am th' unhappy subject of these quarrels.

Por. Sir, grieve not you, you are welcome not
withstanding.

Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong.
And in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, ev'n by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see my self——

Por. Mark you but that!

In both mine eyes he doubly sees himself,
In each eye one; swear by your double self,
And there's an oath of credit!

Bass. Nay, but hear me:

Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear,
I never more will break an oath with thee.

Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth,
Which but for him that had your husband's ring
[To Portia.

Had quite miscarry'd. I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.

Por. Then you shall be his surety; give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.

Ant. Here lord *Bassanio*, swear to keep this ring.

Bass. By heav'n it is the same I gave the doctor.

Por. I had it of him: pardon me, *Bassanio*;
For by this ring the doctor lay with me.

Ner. And pardon me, my gentle *Gratiano*,
For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this, last night did lie with me.

Gra. Why, this is like the mending of highways
In summer, where the ways are fair enough:
What, are we cuckolds ere we have deserv'd it?

Por. Speak not so grossly; you are all amaz'd;
Here is a letter, read it at your leisure;
It comes from *Padua* from *Belario*:
There you shall find that *Portia* was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk. *Lorenzo* here,
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,

And even but now return'd : I have not yet
 Enter'd my house. *Antonio*, you are welcome,
 And I have better news in store for you
 Than you expect ; unseal this letter soon,
 There you shall find three of your Argosies
 Are richly come to harbour suddenly,
 You shall not know by what strange accident
 I chanced on this letter.

Ant. I am dumb.

Bass. Were you the doctor, and I knew you not ?

Gra. Were you the clerk that is to make me cuckold ?

Ner. Ay, but the clerk' that never means to do it,
 Unless he live until he be a man.

Bass. Sweet doctor, you shall be my bedfellow ;
 When I am absent, then lie with my wife.

Ant. Sweet lady, you have giv'n me life and living ?
 For here I read for certain, that my ships
 Are safely come to road.

Por. How now, *Lorenzo* ?

My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.
 There do I give to you and *Jessica*,
 From the rich *Jew*, a special deed of gift,
 After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

Lor. Fair ladies, you drop *Manna* in the way
 Of starved people.

Por. It is almost morning,
 And yet I'm sure you are not satisfy'd
 Of these events at full. Let us go in,
 And charge us there on interrogatories,
 And we will answer all things faithfully.

Gra. Let it be so : the first interrogatory
 That my *Nerissa* shall be sworn on, is,
 Whether 'till the next night she had rather stay,
 Or go to bed, now being two hours to day.
 But were the day come, I should wish it dark,
 'Till I were couching with the doctor's clerk.
 Well, while I live, I'll fear no other thing
 So sore, as keeping safe *Nerissa's* ring.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



